

San Bernardino County Children's Network  
**CHILDREN'S WELFARE SERVICES SELF ASSESSMENT TEAM**

MINUTES

November 3, 2003

Department of Children's Services – Administrative Resources Division  
825 E. Hospitality Lane, Conference Room B/C  
San Bernardino, CA

**In Attendance:**

Betty Ansley	Public Health	<a href="mailto:bansley@dph.sbcounty.gov">bansley@dph.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-388-5660
Johanne Dyerly	Probation Department	<a href="mailto:jdyerly@prob.sbcounty.gov">jdyerly@prob.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-383-2766
Jack Trotter	Sheriff's Department	<a href="mailto:jtrotter@sbcasd.org">jtrotter@sbcasd.org</a>	
Stacy Iverson	First 5 SB	<a href="mailto:siverson@cfc.sbcounty.gov">siverson@cfc.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-386-7706
Susan Melanson	Children's Network	<a href="mailto:smelanson@hss.sbcounty.gov">smelanson@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-5394
Ed Rowe	Children's Network	<a href="mailto:erowe@hss.sbcounty.gov">erowe@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-8938
Claudia Spencer, Chair	Public Health	<a href="mailto:cspencer@hss.sbcounty.gov">cspencer@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-6225
Bonnie Konowitch	Children's Network	<a href="mailto:bkonowitch@hss.sbcounty.gov">bkonowitch@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-5393
Kent Paxton	Children's Network	<a href="mailto:kpaxton@hss.sbcounty.gov">kpaxton@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-8966
Brian Thomson – Co-Chair	Dept. of Children's Services – ARD	<a href="mailto:bthomson@hss.sbcounty.gov">bthomson@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-383-9779
Tom Moore	Dept. of Children's Services – ARD	<a href="mailto:tmoore@hss.sbcounty.gov">tmoore@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-383-9751
Cathy Cimbalo	Dept. of Children's Services	<a href="mailto:ccimbalo@hss.sbcounty.gov">ccimbalo@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-388-0242
Rosemary Mendoza			
Michael Schertell	Department of Behavioral Health	<a href="mailto:mschartell@dph.co.san-bernardino.ca.us">mschartell@dph.co.san-bernardino.ca.us</a>	909-421-9303
Rebecca Stafford	Children's Fund	<a href="mailto:rstafford@dpss.co.san-bernardino.ca.us">rstafford@dpss.co.san-bernardino.ca.us</a>	909-387-4351
Raymond Haight	Juvenile Court	<a href="mailto:rhaight@courts.sbcounty.gov">rhaight@courts.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-8687
Sandra Baxter	County Counsel	<a href="mailto:sbaxter@cc.co.san-bernardino.ca.us">sbaxter@cc.co.san-bernardino.ca.us</a>	909-387-5485
Veronica Hilton	Dept. of Children's Services – ARD	<a href="mailto:vhilton@hss.sbcounty.gov">vhilton@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-383-9784
Tammy Williams	Children's Network	<a href="mailto:tttwilliams@hss.sbcounty.gov">tttwilliams@hss.sbcounty.gov</a>	909-387-5365

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Kent Paxton welcomed all those present and self-introductions were made.

**2. Brief Children's Services Team (CST) History**

Kent Paxton gave the following history of CST. Children's Services Team has been a long-standing committee that has met on a monthly basis. Each month there are various subcommittees present reports on new and existing issues and activities. Children's Services Team has taken direction from Children's Network Policy Council to focus on topics for the community such as Safe Kids Summer Campaign, the Perinatal Leadership Team, and various others.

Judge Victor and Supervisor Hansberger sit on Children's Network Policy Council. Their input is beneficial in discussions on programs and projects serving the community. The Children's Network Annual Conference in September included an introduction to the Child Welfare Services Redesign. Kent suggested expanding the existing CST (Children's Services Team) membership to serve as the Self Assessment Team for the Child Welfare Services Redesign. The group will be analyzing data to identify gaps and weaknesses in the current system; and be an integral part of creating the redesign model, Cathy Cimbalo mentioned the collaborative work that is conducted on a monthly basis through Children's Network would help greatly, since the structure is already in place to get the community involved in the Child Welfare Services Redesign. Claudia Spencer of the Department of Public Health and Brian Thomson of the Department of Children's Services will co-chair this group.

### **3. Child Welfare Services Redesign Overview**

Brian Thomson presented a power point presentation and gave the following highlights:

- The Child Welfare Services Redesign is based on the legislation AB 636.
- The public will be able to review reports, designs of programs, and policies throughout the redesign phase.
- The state will be providing to the counties quarterly management reports.
- Through the quarterly management reports the counties develop their own accountability tools such as; performance standards, improvement goals, annual statewide progress report, and county system improvement plan.
- The three basic components of child welfare outcomes and accountability are: community collaboration – which Children's Network already has in place; data collection and analysis – the Child Welfare Services Self Assessment Team will be providing the analysis of data; and ongoing program improvement activities.
- The Child Welfare Services Self Assessment Team will analyze the data and assist with setting the improvement activities and goals.
- Children's Network will be providing linkages to Children's Network Policy Council, and the community collaboratives through the Child Welfare Services Self Assessment Team.
- The Department of Children's Services will continue to work on the CWS/CMS data driven system for review and interpretation of case management documents.
- There appears to be a possible ranking system in place with the top, middle, and bottom 1/3 counties to be compared to each other, (keeping in mind the size and resources of each county will be different).
- Brian stated this county would be setting the standards of where they will be improving.
- Department of Children's Services are still waiting on the baseline data from the State for this group to begin their analysis.
- One issue that needs to be addressed involves the recurrence of abuse over a 2-year period. There appears to be a problem with the data entry because one incident can be reported from several multiple sources resulting in multiple entries. Or on the same case, there may be some ongoing abuse that is not reported.

- Once the self-improvement plan is developed it will be presented to the Children's Network Policy Council for further action, discussion and approval to take the plan to the Board of Supervisors.
- The self-improvement plan is due to the State by June 2004 unless the date gets extended due to the state not providing the data to this county.
- Some of the issues the self-improvement plan will focus on are; timeliness, response time, length of time for reunification, permanency planning, and other prevention outcome indicators.
- There was some discussion about timelines on adoption. Ten years ago there were 500 to 600 children adopted or placed in guardianship homes, compared to recent findings that 2,600 children have been adopted or went into guardianship homes.

#### Questions and Comments:

- With the Child Welfare Services Redesign will the following programs still be in existence through the Department of Children's Services; ER – emergency response, FM – family maintenance, FR – family reunification, and PP – permanent placement? Yes, the programs will still be in existence because that is how some of funding is allocated to the Department of Children's Services.
- The deadline for the Child Welfare Services Redesign to be fully implemented is in 10 years.
- The funding has primarily been allocated to ER cases due to urgency of the cases with the longer term cases not allocated as much funding.
- The funding structure, legislation, policies and procedures will be changed to focus on prevention and early intervention with community involvement.
- There was some general discussion about the data being sent by the state will being 6 months old by the time it is received. The County will then have approximately one year to one and half years for improvement including outcomes.

#### 4. Child Welfare Services Self Assessment Team

Tom Moore from the Department of Children's Services mentioned: Tom envisions this group to be the clearinghouse for the data collected and then to perform general conclusions. Tom sees this group also, as the link between the self-assessment and system improvement plan. Children's Network already has in place collaborative meetings in each region of the county, so these groups will be able to include the community for input and training purposes. Kent Paxton mentioned that the collaboratives already have in place needs assessments, partnerships, resource development, etc. Collaborative members will act as consultants to this group. A suggestion made was to have Brian Thomson go out to the collaboratives in January to do an educational presentation. **Tammy Williams to inform Brian of the details for the Collaborative meetings in January.** The collaborative members could be given some information on the "new" child welfare redesign and asked to give their input in March for child welfare systems improvement. Kent Paxton reported the Department of Behavioral Health Strategic Plan for families and the First 5 San Bernardino Strategic Plan will fit nicely with the "new" Child Welfare Services Redesign. Some of the work being done at the Family Resource Centers in San Bernardino County is a perfect example of the county and community collaboration.

There was some general discussion about abuse referrals coming from Foster Family Agencies and Group Homes being report to Community Care Licensing and/or Child Protective Services. It appears the statistics for these cases are very few. Tom mentioned that the data from different areas in the county would reflect different areas of concern needing improvement. Kent Paxton reported that Children's Network staff; Susan Melanson chairs the Child Abuse Prevention Council for San Bernardino County. Susan is also a member of the Southern Regional Child Abuse Prevention Council for coordination and linkage of materials for Southern California. CATTA (Child Abuse Treatment Act) is also a member of the Southern Regional Child Abuse Prevention and staff is assisting the group in creating and distributing child abuse prevention messages.

## 5. Discussion

Kent Paxton reported that the former CST (Children's Services Team) has regularly met monthly. **After further discussion, it was decided CWSSAT (Child Welfare Services Self Assessment Team) would continue to meet once a month on the first Monday of the month at 10 a.m. at the Department of Children's Services – Administrative Resources Division, 825 E. Hospitality Lane, Conference Room B/C, San Bernardino.**

Kent Paxton, Claudia Spencer, and Brian Thomson will set the monthly agendas.

There will be extensive training and presentations for the "new" Child Welfare Services Redesign. Sherman Garnett is responsible for the SARB (School Attendance Review Board) for County Superintendent of Schools and would like to have a presentation on the "new" Child Welfare Services Redesign. Commissioner Haight reported that a presentation would be helpful for the court staff and could be coordinated through the court manager per Judge Rex Victor.

Claudia Spencer feels that the cross-disciplinary reports given each month are still valuable and should continue.

Kent reported a special notice would be sent out to the four County Collaboratives, (Focus West, East Valley, Bear Valley Network, and High Desert Partnership for Kids) to announce the special presentation on the "new" Child Welfare Services Redesign. These groups have membership from community-based agencies including faith-based with attendance at most meetings around 40 to 45.

Jack Trotter from the Sheriff's Department mentioned once the "new" plan has been developed for the Child Welfare Redesign it would be helpful to have presentations for the County law enforcement groups; Sheriff, Probation, Public Defender, and District Attorney. Joyce Lewis stated that once a month the Department of Behavioral Health has a meeting with managers and clinic supervisors, and that would be a good time to have a presentation. Stacy Iverson mentioned that a presentation could be made at the regular Commission meetings as well as the Coalition First 5 Agencies meetings next year. It was stated that the Inland Regional Center would be very supportive and would welcome a presentation to their managers.

Next month, December 1<sup>st</sup> an agenda item could be: Work plan with a timeline to review step-by-step the tasks the group will handle.

Rebecca Stafford of Children's Fund reported she has sent out a notice to Department Heads in the County that Children's Fund has \$25,000 set-aside for families with children that were affected by the fires. They have a shortened disaster relief form the case managers can use for referral purposes.

Claudia Spencer will make sure the Public Health Nurses are aware as they are out and about in the community everyday. The funds can be used for; beds, cribs, dressers, medications, clothing, food, etc.

6. **Next Meeting: December 1, 2003**  
**825 E. Hospitality Lane**  
**Conference Room B/C First Floor**  
**San Bernardino, CA**

Respectfully Submitted,

TAMMY WILLIAMS  
Child Welfare Services Self-Assessment Team Recording Secretary

/tgw